

and Beluga caviar we'd spread,
for want of a knife, with the red handle
of my Maybelline mascara brush,

and Crazy Fred,
my Knight of the Crazy Countenance,
would hold up his mug of Dom Perignon,
look up at the windmills of broken
air conditioning in the ceiling,
smile as big as the moon does, and say,
quoting jukebox
rather than Cervantes,

We had a groovy kind of love.

MT. EVEREST

On cold, rainy Southern California days
like this one when I was a kid
and came home from school
my mother'd have all the doors and
windows wide open, airing the house
of her and my father's chain-smoking
and last night's fried chicken,
the wind blowing the criss-cross curtains
into skirts of snow.
I'd put on my slippers and another sweater
and go into the kitchen where my mother
had a stew simmering and a cherry pie
baking in the stove. I'd press my icy
hands and rump up against the oven door
till they nearly cooked, and my rained-on
hair crisped with the smell of cherries.
Today my kids come home and close the doors
and windows I opened, complain that it's
cold in the house, damp from the rain, ask
why don't I turn up the thermostat.
Put on your slippers and another sweater,
I say, but they won't, go on complaining
that I'm not cold like them, me barefoot
with rolled up sleeves, worked up from
rolling pie crust dough for the
cherry pie baking in the oven.
Why aren't you cold, they ask,
and I answer, Because I'm tough.